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9. — *Hans Breitmann's Party. And other Ballads.* Philadelphia: T. B. Peterson and Brothers. 1868. 12mo. pp. 32.

THE old English dramatists seem to have reckoned securely on a laugh, when they brought in a character who spoke broken English, though Shakespeare was the only man of them who made a really comic character in this way out of Fluellen. Hazlitt had a notion that the English were more sensitive to this kind of fun than other nations; but he did not know that the Spaniards had their Biscayans, Moors, and negroes, and the French their Gascon, who amused them in the same way. The little volume before us is one of the most successful of its kind. Not only has the author caught the accent of German-English, but he has caught it as no one but a thorough German scholar could have done; and he shows as great a familiarity with the literature as with the idiom of the language. One of the most comical of the ballads is a ludicrous parody of the *Hildebrand-lied*, at which we could not help laughing, though we shuddered at its audacity. Without being profoundly humorous, the volume is excellent fun, and all the more entertaining that it aims at nothing more. There is real wit in it, and sometimes of a very subtle kind,—as where he says of the *Turners*, that there was “only von Sharman” among them, “und *he* was a *Holstein* Dane.” But we should say it was the author's highest praise, that his mind was able to *play* with his subject,—an achievement almost unprecedented among American authors. The book has no *tendency* whatever; and any reader, whatever his opinions, may find the medicine of an honest laugh in it.

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10. — *If, Yes, and Perhaps. Four Possibilities and Six Exaggerations, with some Bits of Fact.* By EDWARD E. HALE. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1868. 16mo. pp. 296.

THERE is no better company than a parson who is at the same time a man of this world;—so many of them are men altogether, we will not say of *the*, but of *some* other world, whose language is foreign to us, and whose kingdom we trust will never come,—a world quite incredibly inhuman, the creation of a bilious Tract Society, where our bill of fare shall be regulated by dyspeptic colporteurs, and where we shall read endless “Shepherds of Salisbury Plain” and “Dairyman's Daughters,” whenever we are not writing letters to Mrs. Hannah More, or her American copy in water-colors, Miss Hannah Adams.

Mr. Hale has the great advantage of being able to speak *our* language, the very mother tongue of the heathen whom he proposes to convert ; and we should say that it supplied him with what Archimedes and a number of honest people after him have devoutly wished for, — a place to stand on, where he can get a purchase on his hearers, and therefore indulge some reasonable hope of moving them. He is one of the very best magazinists in the country ; we might call him the best, if we could forget Dr. Holmes and Colonel Higginson. He has the rare gift of a light touch, and does not, like so many of our writers, betray a want of training, by bearing on too hard, and making all his strokes of the same laborious thickness. Beyond this, he has so easy a way of making a story seem natural, by little matter-of-fact touches, that a justly outraged religious public has actually turned upon him for doing his business too well, — as if it were not a story-teller's duty to take us in, if he can. His "Man without a Country," the cleverest story that ever appeared in the "Atlantic Monthly," unless we should give that praise to "My Double, and how he undid me," was supposed by many well-meaning persons to be a narrative of fact ; and they felt themselves wronged, when they found it to be a fiction, instead of being thankful, as they should have been, that somebody could make fiction as good a liar as fact commonly is, and thus put their credulity on its guard. The story conveyed an admirable moral pleasantly disguised ; and if facts are useful to us in any other way, we have read history without profit. Indeed, Mr. Hale has generally an adroit way of getting his morals into us without our knowing it, and yet without any sugar-coating. But we confess we prefer to be simply amused, as in "My Double" and "The South American." Mr. Hale seems to imply that these have been taxed with extravagance ; but for ourselves we wish we could have as much as possible more of this extravagance guarded by good taste. Of *extravaganza* we have had, perhaps, more than enough in America. Mr. Hale would be incapable of this, for he is a man of culture, as he shows in fifty pleasant little ways ; and he understands that the ideal is not the stilted, but merely the real set in an unexpected light. We should say that his stories compared with others as good *vers de société* with more serious verse, — less solemn, but more clever, — *better to take*, as they say.